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CITY MANAGER



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September 3, 2015

NEWS RELEASE

Department of Public Health confirms second West Nile virus-related death this year

Preventing mosquito bites continues to be recommended by Health Department

EL PASO, Texas – Today the City of El Paso Department of Public Health announced the second West Nile virus-related death in the area. Officials say the patient was an elderly woman who lived in the 79927 zip code, and had several underlying medical conditions. She was the fourth person reported to have contracted the disease this year*.

"As we extend our thoughts and prayers to this woman's family and friends, we are reminded why preventing this disease is so important," said Robert Resendes, Public Health Director. "While these two deaths involve individuals who had underlying conditions, residents should know that this disease can also affect a healthy person and become life-threatening."

In addition, a 9th person, a homeless elderly man, has been identified as having contracted the disease in El Paso and is included in the list below:

1	Male	Elderly	79905	
2	Male	Elderly	79927	
3	Male	Young Adult	79904	
4	Female	Elderly	79927	*Deceased
5	Male	Elderly	79836	
6	Male	Middle Age	79927	
7	Male	Middle Age	79835	
8	Male	Elderly	79907	Deceased
9	Male	Elderly	Undetermined	

There were no West Nile virus-related deaths reported last year in El Paso County. In 2013 there were 2 West Nile virus-related deaths in the El Paso area. More statistical information is available at:

<http://gis.elpasotexas.gov/health/>

Extra precaution is recommended during the rainy season when greater opportunities exist for mosquito breeding. The best way to avoid exposure to mosquito-borne diseases is to practice the "four Ds":

- DEET - Use insect repellents when you go outdoors. Repellents containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, and some oil of lemon eucalyptus and para-menthane-diol products provide longer-lasting protection. To optimize safety and effectiveness, repellents should be used according to the label instructions.

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Promote Transparent and Consistent Communication Among All Members of the Community

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•**DRESS** - When weather permits, wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks when outdoors. Mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing, so spraying clothes with repellent containing permethrin or another EPA-registered repellent will give extra protection. Don't apply repellents containing permethrin directly to skin. Rather, spray permethrin-containing products only on clothing.

•**DUSK and DAWN** - Take extra care during peak mosquito biting hours. Take extra care to use repellent and protective clothing from dusk to dawn or consider avoiding outdoor activities during these times.

•**DRAIN** - Help reduce the number of mosquitoes around and outside your home by emptying standing water from flowerpots, gutters, buckets, pool covers, pet water dishes, discarded tires, and birdbaths on a regular basis.

You can also mosquito-proof your home by installing or repairing screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitoes out. The City's Vector Control Program is also continuing its proactive fogging and treatment of areas of concern. They actively monitor reservoirs, drains, inactive pools, and investigate citizen's complaints of potential mosquito infestations. Residents may call 311 to report any standing water or areas of concern.

Education

In an effort to increase awareness about the disease and ways the public can protect themselves, the Department of Public Health has added a West Nile virus session to the list of presentations offered by the Speakers Bureau. Local civic and community organizations can schedule a presentation that will include background on the disease, prevention methods, as well as what people can look out for in regards to signs and symptoms of infection. Presentations can be scheduled by visiting www.EPHealth.com and clicking on "Special Projects."

The efforts and services offered by the Department of Public Health support the City of El Paso's strategic goal to nurture and promote a healthy, sustainable community. For more information on the programs and services offered by the Department of Public Health, please visit www.EPHealth.com or dial 2-1-1.

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